

# **IT CAN'T HAPPEN NOWADAYS - CAN IT?**

**by Judith Hatton**



## IT CAN'T HAPPEN NOWADAYS - CAN IT?: Part One

There must be people still living who remember coming across old people who had never married because they had an hereditary disease "in the family". Great-aunt Agnes ignored the warnings and married happily, but many did not. It was only a part, though not an inconsiderable one, of the tragedy of *consumption*, the great killer of the nineteenth century.

It had been known from the earliest times: there are cases among Egyptian mummies: but it raged through the crowded cities of the industrial age, causing something like a half of all deaths: most tragically because they were mostly of young people.

Doctors tried all kinds of remedies: the blood-letting that was the accepted remedy for almost everything, and probably caused more deaths than any disease; drugs, diet, and above all, for those who could afford it: *a change of air*. But little could in fact be done. It was agreed that the disease was hereditary, and so could be blamed on the selfishness of the parents, who should not have married.

The life-style could also be blamed: the story of the lady of the camelias, the beautiful courtesan who, as she was dying, danced, drank, and loved, could be used a warning by those who disapproved of such doings. Many other things were blamed, including the newly fashionable smoking, but especially "giving reign to one's feelings", "indulging the passions". If you lived like a very quiet puritan, the disease ought to leave you alone. This meant that you as well as your parents could be blamed.

### An Infectious Disease: The Proof

In 1868, Jean-Louis Villemin published proof of the disease's contagious nature; in 1882 Koch proved the existence of the tuberculosis bacterium; [1] and as the fate of the "poor" grew to be more and more of an obsession with the mid and late Victorians, it became clear that the disease was more to be found linked with poverty, diet, and, above all, over-crowding, than with heredity or the passions. In 1908, 50 years after Villemin, the British government decreed that sections of acts applying to the prevention of infectious diseases should apply to TB. [2]

### Nothing New

Yet all this had been known for a very long time. In the fourth century BC, the medical writings attributed to Hippocrates listed tuberculosis among the epidemics. [3] The theory of contagion had been plainly set out by Hyeronimus Fracastorius in 1546. [4] By the next century medical men took it for granted, and governments acted upon it. In England in 1689, Richard Morton listed nine causes, most reasonable enough, such as bad air, the physical constitution, and youth, which certainly play their part in the course of the disease. But his ninth cause was simply "contagion". [5]

The first decree was passed by the Republic of Lucca in 1699. Ferdinand of Spain passed his in 1751. [6] Other southern states followed suit. In general it was ordered that the rich should be confined in their own homes, the poor in hospitals; the bedding and even the carriages of those who had died were to be destroyed. But though it was recognized that because of the stringent Spanish laws the Indians in their colonies remained free of tuberculosis longer than those in North America; and though, as George Sand noted in her visit to Majorca in the 1840s:

"Tuberculosis is scarce in these parts and is regarded as infectious", (she did not seem to see any link between these facts); [7] yet the laws were gradually abrogated. Not all physicians were convinced: the application of the edicts was costly; personal interests were involved.

## Politics

And above all the French medical establishment, in about 1650, declared against the theory. [8] It is difficult to understand why, unless it could be that the country was racked with civil war, the young king Louis XIV was an essential political tool, and about this time he was very ill. His father and mother had both died of tuberculosis, and later in life he certainly suffered from it himself. [9] If this illness was also tubercular, there were excellent reasons for not wishing to admit that sufferers should be shut away. Louis would have been little use politically.

French influence was enormous in all fields. Over most of Europe patients lived with their families, often sharing beds with family or friends, as was common then; in peasant households eating from the same dish.

Ordinary people continued to take a sensible view long after the medical establishment had ceased to do so. Tobias Smollett, in his novel *Humphrey Clinker*, published in 1771, [10] wrote of the absurdity of herding sick people together in spas or health resorts, when it was known that "consumption" was contagious; he spoke approvingly of the precautions taken in Italy; John Keats' friend Severne took the ordinary man's view that it was unwise for Keats to spend so much time shut up in the bedroom of his dying brother, [11] but Keats was a medical student and Severne was a layman. When Keats died, the cause was considered to be the cruel attacks of the critics and his "passion" for Fanny Brawne.

The lack of the most elementary precautions against infection seems ludicrous (except that it killed so many people). At the very end of the nineteenth century we are told of a young woman who had been ill for some time but who continued to work as a nurse. The informant was a Harley Street consultant: he helped her to find work. [12]

## "Why Don't You Prevent It?"

So in 1908, 362 years after Fracastorius, 209 years after the Republic of Lucca's decree, the checking of the disease in the only realistic way was decided upon in Britain. In this King Edward VII played an honourable part, and he is credited with perhaps the last word on the subject. Told that tuberculosis is a preventable disease, it is said that he said: "Then why don't you prevent it?" [13]

## IT CAN'T HAPPEN NOWADAYS - CAN IT?: Part Two

Cancer too has been known from the earliest times. The useful ancient Egyptian mummies show signs of it. Hippocrates wrote of it, quite sensibly, in the fourth century BC. But as a disease mostly of older people, it made no such great inroads when most people died before they were forty. However, in the seventeenth century we hear of a "medical facility" (a clinic in modern terms?) set up in France because of the fear of contagious cancer. [14] In 1762, Richard Guy wrote: "May it not therefore be, with more Probability, inferred, that the cancerous humour is a Virus, sui generis..." [15]

[Viruses, once thought to be a sort of "germ" too small to be seen under a microscope or to be trapped in even the finest filter, are now known to be infective particles which act upon the body cells in such a way as to cause disease. It is now accepted that the submicroscopic particles "pilfer" a gene, (a functional unit specifying a single primary gene product: there are about 50,000 genes in an average human cell); in the case of cancer, the onco-gene, or cancer-causing gene, turns malignant when the virus works upon it].

## An Infectious Disease: The Proof

In the following century scientists became preoccupied with the transmissibility of cancer, suspecting that it had a microbial origin. In 1842 William Budd of the British Medical Society noted the link between cancer of the



penis in men and cervical or uterine cancer in their wives. [16] Hospitals set aside special wards for cancer patients, [17] and in New York a special hospital was built for them. [18] The entry in the great German encyclopedia, Brockhaus, of 1902, declares that it is not yet certain whether the cause is heredity or contagion. [19] Six years later it seemed that the question had been answered.

In 1908 Ellerman and Bang in Denmark identified a virus causing chicken leukemia, [20] and in 1910 Peyton Rous in the USA that causing chicken sarcoma. [21] In 1911 similar work was done in Japan, and in the three following years Rous and the Japanese Fujimani Inanoto identified three more viruses in chickens and ducks.

It seems that one of the consequences of so much of this work having been done on chickens is that to this day chickens can be immunized against cancer. [22]

In 1917, Waelsch identified the virus causing cancerous warts in human beings, and in 1919 Wile and Kinger in the USA found one which caused human papillomata (another sort of wart).

## Nothing New

Rous's work, in spite of the confirmation of it by these other researchers, was under attack as late as 1958: at the 7th International Congress Against Cancer, it was said that "the Rous sarcoma was a laboratory artifact which had misled cancer researchers for fifty years".

[Yet the Rockefeller University Press's "Peyton Rous" (1971) stated plainly: "Intellectual support for what had been called 'the virus hypothesis of cancer' was at its lowest ebb when elegant, experimental proof of it issued from Rous's laboratory". [23] It also remarked that "tumor after tumor ... had had infectious causes ascribed to it by the heroes of nineteenth century bacteriology", and "at the present time, more than half the published work on cancer causation stems, and stems not at all remotely, from Rous's 1910 discovery". [24] But by then he had got an award from the World Health Organization, and the Nobel Prize].

However, a theory put forward by the German Boveri (1862 - 1915) had been gaining ground: the somatic mutation hypothesis. According to this, the disease was caused by changes in the chromosomes, the instruments of heredity. [25] [Indeed, as can be seen by the above remarks on viruses, the theories of Boveri and Rous are completely reconciled by the fact that it is viruses that cause changes in the genes that make up the chromosomes].

But the National Cancer Institute, founded in 1937 in the USA, considered it established that mammalian cancer was not infectious, and grouped viruses with other micro-organisms as etiological agents (causes) that could be disregarded. It was said that it seemed that the NCI had a deeper commitment to theories of treatment than it had to discovering the cause of cancer. But its founders knew what they did not like - viruses.

## Still Nothing New

Bittner, who discovered in 1936 the milk agent in the cause of cancer of the mammary gland in mice, showing that viruses, anti-bodies, bacteria, hormones, and carcinogens (cancer-causing agents) can be passed from mother to offspring in suckling, avoided in his thesis the word virus, to which so many of his colleagues "were obviously allergic". [26]

The viruses, however, continued to turn up, though as Bauemler tells us in his *Cancer*, in 1967, virologists had to mask their discoveries in general terms, and Dr Charlotte Friend of Sloan-Kettering Institute remarked, after announcing a new mouse leukemia virus in 1956, that anyone who found a new cancer virus was thought to have either a hole in his head or a hole in his filter. [27]

## An Infectious Disease: The Proof, Again

But Drs Gross, Sarah Stewart and Bernice Eddy at the National Institute of Health found the polyoma virus in mice, Dr Gross a leukemia virus also in mice. And in July 1962 the influential US magazine *Life* published a report



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on a survey carried out by the NCI in Washington County, Maryland. The 100,000 inhabitants of this area, which was known for its exceptionally careful keeping of records, were studied for five years. The article, by A. Rosenfeld, was headed "Clues to a Deadly Riddle", and subtitled: "Scientists find new evidence that cancer may be infectious". [28]

It was shown that in families cancers often occurred in a pattern of relationships that pointed clearly to a lengthy period of contact with a source of contagion: most common between husbands and wives, then between sisters, then brothers, and lastly between brothers and sisters, probably reflecting accurately the order of intimacy in family life.

There were whole families: four brothers in one case; father, mother, six children and the lone grandchild in another, all dying of cancer. It occurred too in specific places: a school; a small district in a city in which there were 25 cases, though in the neighbouring area there were only three. There was evidence that "old wives' tales" about cancer houses were indeed based on fact, and there were two cases of trees afflicted with cancer-like growths found near to "cancer houses".

The article quoted at length from a lecture given by Dr Robert J. Huebner, director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Disease, given at the New York Academy of Medicine in 1960. It was called "Cancer as an infectious disease". It apparently received little attention.

He attributed the widespread refusal to accept the virus theory to an "intellectual impediment" (described more politely by Rous himself as "metaphysics"), namely the habit of thinking of cancer as an unique disease.

"The central message of the microbial theory" said Huebner, "states simply that a specific microbe is the 'essential' cause of an infectious disease, and that all other contributing factors necessary for its clinical expression are secondary or 'proximate' causes".

## More Proof

It was perhaps also a sign that views were at last changing (for it was the NCI that carried out the survey, and it had once known that it didn't like viruses); another sign was that 52 years after his discovery, Dr Peyton Rous received an award from the World Health Organization. The Director General said: "The part played by viruses in causing cancer was brilliantly demonstrated half a century ago..." [29]

He hedged his bets by giving awards also to a number of other researchers for work on environmental causes and the relationship between lung cancer and smoking, and also what was described as "the theory of experimental design in epidemiological studies of cancer".

In 1966, 56 years after his discovery, when he was 85 years old, Dr Peyton Rous got the Nobel Prize. He had given up his work long before. But as Rous himself wrote: "Cancer research is the one of the last strongholds of metaphysics". [30]

Replying to Boveri's somatic mutation hypothesis, he wrote: "A hypothesis is best known by its fruits. What have been those of the somatic mutation theory?...It has led within the year to an authoritative statement, in the lay press, that as cancer is certainly due to somatic mutations, the possibility of having it is 'inherent'; and that this being so, the most man can ever do is to palliate such malignant tumors ... here is fatalism to blast many a hope and effort [and a reminiscence, perhaps, of the understandably anonymous colleague of Sir Richard Doll's who in the 1940s said it was a waste of time and *immoral* to try to prevent cancer...]...Most serious of all the results of the somatic mutation hypothesis" continued Rous "has been its effect on research workers: it acts as a tranquillizer on those who believe in it."

## "Does Everything Cause Cancer?"

Certainly at this time and up to the present some confusion could be expected, since among the causes of cancer were or are listed, besides somatic mutation (changes in the actual cells) whether admitted to be caused by viruses or not:

Carcinogens such as soot, bischloromethyl ether used in the chemical industry, vinyl chloride fumes in the rubber industry, asbestos, chrome, ionizing radiations, carcinogenic hydrocarbons produced by fires, urban pollution,



hormonal secretions; natural foods such as peanuts and maize containing aflatoxin in conjunction with the hepatitis B virus; man-made foods, the herb comfrey, not eating enough carrots, eating mouldy bread and pickled vegetables, a particular kind of salt-cured fish eaten in China; chewing betel nut in India, smoking cigars with the burning end in the mouth (this *is* done somewhere in the East); eating bracken in Japan; heredity; eating fat; being fat; being old; drinking alcohol and coffee; having an active sex life; having no sex life; and smoking.

There is point in the title of an article in the *Consumer Research Magazine* of May 1989: "Does Everything Cause Cancer?"

In the Royal Society of Medicine's Stevens lecture in London in 1986 [31], Sir Richard Doll lists some of these causes, and adds that "when tobacco is smoked it is responsible for the vast majority of all cancers of the lung throughout the world". He includes besides lung cancers, cancers of the mouth, pharynx, oesophagus and larynx, besides one- to two-thirds of cancers of the pancreas and bladder, and probably also some cancers of the kidney.

"Reduction in the use of tobacco would not, however, have much effect on some of the very high rates of oesophageal cancer that occur in parts of the USSR, China, and East and South Africa". He does not explain this statement.

## Proof Again

But he does list fourteen cancers definitely or possibly caused by viruses, and goes on to say that bischloromethyl ether is an extremely powerful carcinogen that causes lung cancer especially of the oat-cell type.

All or any of these may be contributory causes: there were many factors that contributed to tuberculosis (though there were a number of cases where none of them seemed to apply), but if a disease is virus-borne then the virus must be present for that illness to appear. The patient may well get something else if he's doing a number of unhealthy things, but not that.

As was said in the Hoxsey Clinic's *Cancer and Cure*: "The destruction of cells locally does nothing to eradicate the cause of that cancer, and as long as that is still operating in the body, cancer...is bound to break out again in some other weak spot". [32]

## More Proof

It looks as if there is proof that cancer, like tuberculosis, seeks out the weakest part of the organism. As tuberculosis could show itself as lesions in the lungs, the neck (scrofula), the bones, the intestines; as meningitis, anal fistula, or skin disease, so cancer takes many forms. Dr Gross (another recipient of the WHO award) and Drs Sarah Stewart and Bernice Eddy had found that the polyoma virus could produce more than twenty different varieties of malignant tumour, and this in other creatures than the mice in which it was first found.

Evidence mounted of the variations produced by presumably the same virus. In 1940 it had been shown that among oil workers the whites tended to get more cancer of the skin, but the blacks, whose skins are better adapted for protection against such hazards, tended to get the disease internally. "...people with very light skins are especially liable to injury by ultra-violet rays. Dark-hued people with skins very rich in pigment are, on the other hand, better protected." [33]

In Dutch Indonesia, soon after, it was shown that among 5,300 women those who had had the cervix removed had almost as many cancers outside the cervix as those still with cervixes had in them. [34] Nuns almost never have cancer of the cervix, but more breast cancer than women who have born and suckled children.

7th Day Adventists, who don't smoke or drink, have fewer cases of lung cancer, but the usual rate of other kinds. A report in the *Lancet* in January 1991 describes the occurrence in families of many different kinds of tumours: breast, lung, colon, pancreas, and prostate, all it seems caused by the same mutated chromosome. [35]

## "Why Don't You Prevent It?"

To the layman all this looks convincing enough. It's infectious: you know what you do when your child's got measles. There is, however, more to it than that. The analogy with tuberculosis may break down. You can get that from someone sneezing over you (though you are not likely to if you are healthy). But there are many ways in which contagion may be conveyed. Some require the assistance of rats, lice, or mosquitoes, others of a food or of sewage.

It is possible that the infective agent in cancer is the mouse. The polyoma virus has been found in house mice, and also in farm mice, both infected in huge numbers, and in the farms they infest granaries and grain stores. Do they infect the bread we eat? [36]

Again the impatient layman will say: "All right, forget Mickey. The mouse is the enemy." He may, if he knows something about it, point out that huge sums of money are continually being spent on cancer research: in the USA a billion and a half dollars in the one year 1987; since 1971 the National Institute of Health alone has spent six and a half billion dollars. How much of this has gone on practical measures (such as breeding more good mousers)?

## Politics?

The answer seems to be very little, if any. Far the greatest sums of money have gone to institutions that are researching, often painstakingly and brilliantly, the etiology (the ultimate cause) of the disease. This is extremely interesting work.

Time and again the accounts of the workers in this field speak of their fascination with the actual mechanics of the work. The virus, it seems, invades the cell, and seizes upon the chromosomes, the structures in the cell that carry the genes, which are responsible for the programming of the entire development of the body.

Researchers like to solve problems, and this is a particularly enthralling one, dealing as it does with the very stuff of life. "Mankind may ultimately stand at the very threshold of creation...the question is not only what is cancer but what is life?" says Bauemler. [37] This is not a question much concerning someone dying of cancer.

## "Why Don't YOU Prevent It?"

The ignorant reader can become fascinated too with this tiny world of genes and retroviruses, oncogenes, srcs (pronounced sarks), and many other terms in the exotic jargon.

"Molecular biologists" says the author of *Natural Obsessions*, "live in a beautiful crystal palace, where esoteric flowers of their own choosing leap into bloom...the integrated artifice within obscures and supplants the natural disjunctions without." [38] *Natural Obsessions* is full of indications of the beauty and also of the unreality of this world. Each of a dozen researchers declares: "I like to solve puzzles". [39] We are told of "the lush beauty of doing science..." [40]

"I'm quite high on this". [41]

Another researcher speaks of "sheer delight" in his work. [42]

"No wonder [a scientist] prefers basic research to medicine. *Oncology [cancer] wards today remain ghettos of pain [my emphasis]*". [43]

Already in 1962 the United States Department of Health, Education and Welfare publication, *American Scientists in Cancer-Virus Research*, had listed nearly four hundred scientists in this field in the United States alone. And this was before unlimited money flooded in in the seventies.



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With so much passionate interest in the great work, it seems impolite to recall the words of Professor Charles Huggins: "The day is not far off...to immunize our children against chemical carcinogens." He was wrong: this was in 1965: some of the children must already be dead. [44]

### "Why Don't You PREVENT It?"

"If you're giving me money, I'll talk about cures..." *Natural Obsessions* quotes, and: "...in our work we never think about such things [cures] even for a second." [45] None of this is exactly reassuring to the relations or friends of a cancer victim, or to the victim himself. Still less is it to read this:

"There are some people who do think they are looking for a cure. They're not basic researchers: they're in a sort of applied field, medical research. They really don't know what's going on inside the cell. They'll try any kind of desperate thing." The contempt implied is not agreeable. What sort of scientists do they think they are, trying to cure people? [46]

## Politics

The sums of money spent are huge. We do not like to think that we can be influenced by crass political or financial motives, but we may not be so different from the French in 1650. President Nixon in the early seventies, seeking to restore his standing, decreed that Congress no longer had to approve grants for cancer research: they were to be sent to the President himself for his direct consent. [47]

The billions have been granted. At the University of California a researcher says: "You can't do experiments to see what causes cancer...it's not an accessible problem. You've got to live, you've got to eat, you've got to keep your postdocs happy." [48]

Another, more sturdy, declares: "It wouldn't bother me a bit...if the disease were wiped off the face of the earth. I have plenty of other ways to earn a living." [49]

But a woman doctor at a dinner-party rounds on Raymond Damadian, inventor of the NMR scanner, with: "If you accomplish all you say, who is going to pay the tuition for my son at college?" [50]

*The Cancer Mission* says: "The cynical view is that, assured of a booty (if not a blank cheque) to conduct cancer research for the foreseeable future, the scientists could well afford to mouth a pious vocabulary. Instead, the targeting of cancer research as the paramount research priority raised a spectre of success, a climate of expectation and visibility that the biomedical community refused to endorse." [51]

The impatient layman would interpret this as meaning that the biomedical community is refusing to do what it's paid for, and it'd better move over and let the cats and terriers kill the mice.

As *The Cancer Mission* continues, in its way: "Has scientific growth been so equated with institutionalized forms that knowledge, rationality, and evidential norms - the object world - are rendered impotent, incidental epiphenomena to social forms? We think so". [52] Are the scientists so much out of touch with reality that they don't want to know?

### "Why DON'T You Prevent It?"

The modern research scientist is described by Sigismund Peller as "an affluent young man of excellent knowledge and skill in a narrow field, with both feet on the ground, and with an ability to chit-chat and socialize in the correct circles." [53] Robert S. Morrison, in the foreword to *The Cancer Mission*, speaks of the gradual realisation that "events outside science such as Mary Lasker's cocktail parties or Sydney Farber's Jimmy Fund had something to do with the setting of science policy." He also wrote of the book as "an introduction to policy making in the era of Big Science", and "...science policy...has also involved a number of special interests and people with axes to grind." [54]



## IT CAN'T HAPPEN NOWADAYS, CAN IT?

Raymond Damadian, who would without doubt be complimented by being described as nothing like the type of young scientist described above, has something to say about the cancer establishment: "Lots of people try to suppress breakthroughs...my general opinion of why we have had cancer around for the last fifty or seventy years is because we've suppressed the cure." [55]

He goes on: "[it was] beyond the capacity of any one individual to do it, because the forces opposing it were too much." [56]

"The vested interests in this business are decades deep, maybe centuries deep."

"...the cancer establishment. They didn't want this machine to happen. It might get rid of the disease. That's why we still have cancer with us...the only thing we've got out of this expensive cancer research is that deaths from cancer keep going up."

"The cancer industry may spend 45 billions a year...more people are living on cancer than dying from it." [57]

He quotes a famous professor of chemistry who said: "It's not important to me who's right or who's wrong but that I'm on the side of the majority..." [58]

"*The vested interests* [my emphasis]" says Damadian, "the jealousy of other scientists, bureaucratic inefficiency, the simple ingrained hostility of Establishment authorities to new ideas..." [59]

With some pathos, Damadian expresses his hope that his scanner may be adapted to cure the disease. "Nobody else is going to cure cancer. So I'm going to have to do it." [60]

## Why?

Confirmation of all this comes from an article in the *Journal of the Royal Society of Medicine*, reported in January 1991 in the *Daily Telegraph*, in which Dr Denis Burkett says that progress against cancer has been negligible in spite of research costing 150 million a year. (And of course very much more than this in the United States). [61] Treatments developed through molecular genetics - the sort of work described in *Natural Obsessions* and *The Cancer Mission*, the most prestigious area of modern cancer research, which is swallowing a large part of the cancer budget, are several decades away, he says.

High-powered research is not winning the cancer war. Most advances against cancer have been achieved by "simple" research - for example, straightforward studies in animals have shown that fruit and vegetables are protective against cancer.

## Why? Why?

But as Peller said: "Attention was only paid to those who joined the philosophical bandwagon or could be taken aboard. A researcher who in the nineteen thirties or forties presented new ways of looking at and combating cancer was ignored, pushed aside, and if this did not help, he was marked as a crack-brain. The researcher who did not play the game and applied for a grant did not have a chance. He was usually rejected for some such reason as 'being too old'..."

"Is it any different today? Do those who are engaged in research and combat of cancer really want to find the way out of the labyrinth, no matter what it means to their petty problems, positions, prestige, power and *income*?", (my emphasis)). [62]

"Just as the Russian government keeps its own population ignorant of Western thinking, so our representatives of cancer and medical science and business actually utilized unethical means to prevent our physicians and the public from listening to unorthodox views." [63]

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"My impression is" he says "that our large cancer institutes have borrowed the Parkinson Laws from the bureaucratic establishment. This work goes on ad infinitum without budging the problem." [64]

In 1980, Ralph W. Moss wrote a book about the failure of cancer research to produce a cure for the disease, and ten years later he rewrote it, under a new title: *The Cancer Industry: Unraveling the Politics*. He was formerly assistant director of public affairs at the Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Centre in New York, probably the most prestigious cancer clinic in the United States.

## Why? Over And Over Again...

He says roundly that the "cancer establishment" plays games with statistics to create the illusion of success, at the same time rejecting alternative treatments. The example he gives is that for 1973 to 1978, that is, after the leap in funding initiated by President Nixon, the five-year survival times, after which a patient is judged cured (though many die after a longer time), went up miserably from 38.5 to 40.1 percent. So, he says, the "cancer warriors...found a more impressive set of figures to bring before Congress, a variant of the five-year survival statistic called the relative survival rate."

This assumed that a certain number of those dying of cancer in the five years could have died of something else: a heart attack or axe murder or something. By applying this new standard, the "cures" jumped from 40 percent to 49.2 percent, and all looked well. [65] How many other such lying statistics are we fed?

The question of those who have actually claimed that they have budged the question is another subject altogether, and one that is likely to arouse a particular fury in those committed to the establishment view. There have been many such claims, many made by qualified medical persons. Many of us know of at least one victim who has been cured against the odds by unorthodox treatments, but we are wary about saying so.

## I'm Tired Of Asking Why

There is also the more important question of immunisation and other possible protective measures. Tuberculosis was checked by the segregation of patients, and by the general improvement in living and housing standards, before anyone knew what the bacteria causing it actually did. Plague was checked in Europe long before anything at all was known about the causes of it, by a rigid system of quarantine. Bauemler says: "The dramatic history of medicine clearly proves that it has so far been possible successfully to control or check diseases without elucidating their ultimate cause." [66]

Italy, true to its distinguished medical record in other fields, seems to be leading the way. Having noticed the probable link between victims of Hepatitis B (which is highly infectious) and cancer of the liver, observed by the Nobel Prize winner Blumberg, who hoped that a vaccine preventing Hepatitis B might prevent liver cancer, the Italian government, according to *The Lancet*, has ordered compulsory vaccination of all Hepatitis B victims. The vaccine has also been offered to health care workers, drug addicts, prostitutes, homosexuals, and babies of mothers found to be Hepatitis B positive. A bill was to be brought forward asking for compulsory vaccination for all children. [67] There is also a vaccination programme being carried on in the Gambia, with help from the Italian government. It is interesting to note that this programme was begun in 1986. [68]

In the lecture quoted above, in 1986, Sir Richard Doll also said: "Other vaccines may eventually become available to prevent the several other cancers that now seem likely to owe their origin at least in part to viral infection..."

*The Lancet* also describes a programme of mass immunization in Greece [69], and in an earlier issue states that a vaccine is now available in more than 20 other countries, including the UK at a cost of £31.50. [70] The article in *Life* in 1962 described the work of Dr Clara J. Fonti, who won a prize from France for research; she ran a clinic in Milan, and had produced a cancer vaccine that she gave to her patients; it also showed Dr W. Mervyn Crofton, FRSM, who had also produced a vaccine (though he found he had to do his work in his own time and publish his findings at his own expense). [71]



## Just Once More - Why?

The published *Proceedings of the Royal Society* tell us that in 1984 a prototype vaccine was developed to prevent tumours associated with the Epstein-Barr virus. By 1967, Dr Maurice Hilleman (of the American Drug Company, Merck, Sharp and Dohme, which is involved in the Gambia programme), and others before him, had treated hamsters with an anti-tumour vaccine. Immunisation against leukemia is available for cats at a cost of £50. [72] And a vaccine has been developed that will really prevent lymphomas (types of cancer) in cotton-top tamarin monkeys. [73]

It is not necessary, perhaps, to hold any ideas about establishment plots and elaborate cover-ups. Ordinary human stupidity and obstinacy will do just as well.

A curious parallel has just turned up to do with peptic ulcers. Two Australian doctors had identified the virus that causes these unpleasant things. Now, like other virus-borne diseases, they can be treated with antibiotics, according to an article in the *Sunday Telegraph*, of the April 28, 1991. It has taken ten years for this to be accepted. Dr Peyton Rous' followers might well think them very lucky. Simone Weill, asked how long, once a scientific theory had been disproved, it took for that theory to be discredited, replied: "When the last scientist holding it is dead".

Doctors in the past, unable, as it seemed, to do anything to help the tragic sufferers from tuberculosis, would recommend them to stop this and that: not to live in towns, not to work, not to eat rich food, not to drink, not to take exercise, not to dance, not to marry, not to love. The doctors were safe in recommending these futile remedies, because they knew that very few of their patients could obey them all, so their deaths could always be shown to be their own fault.

Do vets tell chickens what they must not do? No, they immunize them. To quote the *Veterinary Record*: "Vaccines against Marek's Disease [cancer in chickens] are the most exciting advance in the realm of control of cancer...Marek's Disease vaccines represent the first and only effective vaccine for the control of naturally occurring malignant neoplasia in any species." [74]

If you would like to take a reasonable precaution against cancer for yourself or your family, what can you do? Go to Italy or the Gambia? Or to a vet?

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